

iridium project output

iridium research data catalogue user testing

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iridium Research Data Catalogue testing

Background

The background to the proof-of-concept Research Data Catalogue (RDC) has previously been described¹.

User testing

Staff members from a specific institutional research theme were invited to use the system within a 4 week period, with sample research information data (projects, publications) from their own research profile imported to the system. Testers were asked to link publications to the appropriate research project (where possible) and identify where the research data was.

User feedback themes and implications

Representative quotes from testers:

“I have had a go at using the Research Data Catalogue and on the whole it seems quite straightforward to use.”

“I found the website easy to use, I did not encounter any problems.”

“I did try and link it to the data sources with varying degrees of success and failure. I have a few comments/feedback which may be useful.”

Table 1. Themes and implications from comments received from user testers.

User feedback themes	Implications
Work was not funded through a grant	Representation of ‘unfunded’ projects/publications within University system should be considered
Webpage needs a help section to explain what is required for each field	System (both website and offline) documentation should give further guidance and examples of good practice in describing records
Function and definition of each ‘button’/feature	Documentation should explain better system functions (i.e. ‘filter’, ‘metadata status’)
Publication data located in multiple locations	Practical guidance need on how to record publication data sets. ‘Packaging’ of data sets and archiving in a set location should be considered
Single data location record and other information needs to be re-used for multiple publications	Common user responses should be selectable from a template/common settings profile to save time
Efficient entry of the metadata	Use of quality metadata source to pre-populate records should be considered (i.e. journal publication keywords)
‘Auto-tagging’ metadata quality	System suggested ‘auto-tagging’ needs to be more sophisticated
User reassurance on record entry completion	Usability to be improved by making save record feature give more overt confirmation
Greater filtering of different publication types	More advanced filtering needed where possible from underlying database records
User role delegation (i.e. Principal Investigator to Co-investigator)	Role delegation functions from similar RIM systems should be considered
Imported database records up to date	Needs to be investigated if specific to testing process or

¹http://research.ncl.ac.uk/media/sites/researchwebsites/researchdatamanagement/iridium_Research%20Data%20Catalogue%20Quick%20Start%20Guide_April_2013_V6_user-testing.pdf (accessed June 2013)

User feedback themes	Implications
	reliant on external data feed provider/a reliant system publication claim process

The RDC final specification is available from project outputs page².

² http://research.ncl.ac.uk/media/sites/researchwebsites/iridium/iridium_research_data_catalogue_specification_07_6_2013_v1_PT.pdf
(accessed June 2013)